

What is claimed is:

1. An image processing device, comprising: a plurality of image data processing means which have different security levels and which process inputted image data; and a plurality of image data processing requesting means which request any of the image data processing means to process image data, characterized in that:

the image data processing requesting means have a function to verify security levels of second image data processing means to which the image data processing is to be requested and then request the second image data processing means to perform alternate processing of image data in addition to an image data processing means first requested to process the image data.

2. The image processing device according to claim 1, characterized in that the image data processing requesting means have a function to select, from among the plurality of image data processing means, all other image data processing means whose security level is equal to or higher than the security level of the image data processing means first requested to process the image data, and a function to request the selected second image data processing means to perform alternate processing of the image data.

3. An image processing device, comprising: a plurality of image data processing means which have different security levels and which process inputted image data; and an image data processing requesting means which request any of the image data processing means to process image data, characterized in that:

the image data processing requesting means have a function to verify a security level of a second image data processing means to which the image data processing is to be requested and then request the second image data processing means to perform alternate processing of the image data in place of an image data processing means first requested to process the image data if the first image data processing means can no longer continue processing subsequent part of the image data.

4. The image processing device according to claim 3, characterized in that the image data processing requesting means have a function to select, from among the plurality of image data processing means, all other image data processing means whose security level is equal to or higher than the security level of the image data processing means first requested to process the image data, and a function to request the selected second image data processing means to perform alternate processing of subsequent part of the image data.

5. An image processing system, comprising: a plurality of image data processing means which have different security levels and which process inputted image data; and an image data processing requesting means which request any of the image data processing means to process image data, where the image processing system distributes image data received from the image data processing requesting means to second image data processing means available for distributed processing in addition to an image data processing means first requested to process the image data, characterized in that:

the data processing requesting means have a function to verify security levels of the second image data processing means to which the image data distributed processing is to be requested and then request the second image data processing means to perform distributed processing of the image data; and

the second image data processing means have a function to perform distributed processing of the image data in conjunction with the image data processing means first requested to process the image data.

6. An image processing system, comprising: a plurality of image data processing means which have different security levels and which process inputted image data; and image data processing requesting means which request any of the image data processing means to process image data, where the image

processing system alternated processes image data inputted by the image data processing requesting means to a second image data processing means available for alternate processing in place of an image data processing means first requested to process the image data, characterized in that:

the image data processing requesting means have a function to verify a security level of the second image data processing means to which the image data alternate processing is to be requested and then request the second image data processing means to perform alternate processing of the inputted image data if the first image data processing means first requested to process the image data can no longer continue processing subsequent part of the image data; and

the second image data processing means has a function to perform alternate processing of the subsequent part of the image data in place of the image data processing means first requested to process the image data.